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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02
OPIC-03 SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 L-03 H-01
NSC-05 SS-15 STR-07 CEA-01 PA-01 AGRE-00 IO-13
OES-07 DOE-15 SOE-02 /138 W
----------087030 230555Z /17
R 221821Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4458
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 04639

E.O.11652: GDS

SUBJECT: UK DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FOR ZAIRE

REF: LONDON 4183

1. DENIS MANIECE, CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA DEPARTMENT HEAD, MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT, JUST RETURNED FROM KINSHASA MEETING OF WORLD BANK WORKING GROUP ON AGRICULTURE, CONFIRMED SUBSTANCE OF REFTEL. HMG WILL NOT BE PROVIDING BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE. ZAIRE'S POLITICAL STANCE AND ITS LOCATION, NOT TO MENTION ITS ECONOMIC POTENTIAL AND MINERAL WEALTH, COMPEL HMG TO JOIN IN OFFERING SOME AID. BUT THE DIFFICULTIES IN REALIZING AID PROJECTS, THE LACK OF LOCAL SUPPORT, THE NON-AVAILABILITY OF FUEL AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE, LIMIT THE AREAS IN WHICH ODM CAN REALISTICALLY PARTICIPATE. ODM'S CURRENT TWO MILLION POUND STERLING CAPITAL CONTRIBUTION WILL GO FOR ROAD RECONSTRUCTION -- PRINCIPALLY BAILEY BRIDGES -- WHICH WILL HELP TO RELIEVE ONE (OF MANY) OBSTACLES TO AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, MANIECE SAID. FUTURE
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UK AID TO ZAIRE WOULD LIKELY BE IN THE SAME (TRANSPORTATION) SECTOR.

2. MANIECE WAS SKEPTICAL OF THE VIABILITY OF THE MOBUTU PLAN, GIVEN AN APPARENT ZAIRIAN UNWILLINGNESS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE PROBLEMS OF MISDEPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE, FUEL AND SPARE PARTS; THE ABSENCE OF AN AGRICUL-

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TURAL PRICING POLICY TO ENCOURAGE PRODUCTION AND THE IN-
EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NATIONALIZED TRADING SECTOR, ALL OF
WHICH WERE RECOGNIZED BY THE GOZ AS OBSTACLES TO DEVELOP-
MENT. IF, IN FACT, FINANCIAL CONTROL IS ACHIEVED UNDER
THE IMF UMBRELLA, IF DEBT IS SUCCESSFULLY RESCHEDULED,
HMG WILL REASSESS ITS POSITION. THE LACK OF AN HISTORI-
CAL BOND BETWEEN THE UK AND ZAIRE, HOWEVER, MEANS THAT
ZAIRE HAS FEW LOBBYISTS WITHIN ODM, AND UK AID IS LIKELY
TO REMAIN AT A TOKEN LEVEL, GIVEN THE OVERALL CONSTRAINTS
ON DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN THIS COUNTRY.

STREATOR

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